

FRENCH REENTRY COURTS AND REHABILITATION

Mister Jourdain of Desistance

This book is the result of a two year and a half research which pertained to *Juge de l'application des peines* (JAP), a French reentry and supervision judge which had never been empirically studied before. It focuses on what JAP say about themselves and what their partners have to say about them. It then studies what they do, during their hearings and in their rulings, and how they interact with offenders. The study's main compass is desistance: do JAP have such a compass and do they know what it takes to desist? It shows that even though they have no theoretical knowledge of desistance, they do have a broad understanding of the desistance process and do act accordingly. This in depth immersion in JAP's quotidian and practices also reveals how complex their relationship with other agencies, and in particular with probation services, is. It analyses the reasons behind these tensions and suggests practical solutions. The study also presents the obstacles facing JAP face who still try and respect fair trial and sentences' individualisation principles and to simply ensure that sentences and their implementation are meaningful for probationers and the community.

The author studied their practices both from the qualitative and quantitative viewpoint. She abundantly refers to international literature, with a particular focus on 'desistance', 'therapeutic jurisprudence' and 'legitimacy of justice'. This book is a plea in favour of this nearly seventy year old French ancestor of problem-solving courts.

Desistance – Rehabilitation – Reentry Courts – problem-solving courts –
legitimacy of justice – judicial rituals – fair trial – therapeutic jurisprudence –
probation – offender supervision – probation staff – probation services –
France – prisoners' release.

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